

## Greater Aberdeen - Greater Havre de Grace Community Area

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### Community Character

The Greater Aberdeen-Greater Havre de Grace Community Area is one of the most diverse and environmentally sensitive areas of Harford County. The area represents a major portion of the Development Envelope as defined in the Land Use Element Plan. Geographically, the area is in the eastern portion of the County. It is bounded by the Chesapeake Bay and the Susquehanna River on the east, Webster and Lapidum Roads on the north, Carsins Run Road and Stepney Road to the west, and Grays Run, Bush River, and Aberdeen Proving Ground on the south. Included in the boundary of the community area are the City of Aberdeen, a major industrial, commuter, and educational center; the City of Havre de Grace, a tourism, historic, medical, and technology center; and Aberdeen Proving Ground, a Federal installation and the County's major employer.

The Greater Aberdeen-Greater Havre de Grace Area had a 2000 population of 33,491 which is 15% of the overall County population (Figure 41). Between 1990 and 2000 the population of the area increased by over seven percent. Experiencing the largest increase was the 35-49 year old age group which increased by 27% - from 6,454 to 8,190. The most significant decrease in population occurred in the 20-34 year old age group. This group declined by 22% - from 7,599 to 5,924. During this same time period, the number of households in the community increased by almost 12% going from 11,863 to 13,265.

### Aberdeen - Havre de Grace Demographic Profile: 1990 – 2000

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total Population	31,181	33,491	7.41%
<b>Total Households</b>	11,863	13,265	11.82%
<b>Median Household Income (in current \$)</b>	\$30,712	\$42,403	\$38.07%
Employment	13,355	19,921	49.17%
<b>Population By Race / Hispanic Origin</b>			
White	24,358	24,983	2.57%
Black	5,960	6,620	11.07%
American Indian/Alaska Native	98	85	-13.27%
Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	591	621	5.08%
Other	174	328	88.51%
Population of 2 or more Races	NA	854	NA
Hispanic Origin	486	834	71.60%

Figure 41

Throughout the County, household income is up 37%. The median household income for this area grew 38% in the last decade from \$30,712 to \$42,403. Households in this community earning over \$100,000 a year, increased by 320%, while households earning less than \$50,000 a year decreased by 17%. Total employment in this area increased by 49% from 13,355 to 19,921.

As a transportation hub, the area is serviced by I-95, U.S. Route 40, MD Routes 22, 7, and 155, as well as the AMTRAK, CSX, and MARC rail lines. Airport facilities such as the Aldino Airpark, Phillips Airfield, and Havre de Grace's seaplane base are also important transportation facilities located in this area. Numerous marinas in the Susquehanna and Bush Rivers provide regional and community recreation opportunities. The abundance of these types of service facilities has created pressure to expand growth opportunities in both residential and industrial uses, and challenges the community to offer growth while maintaining a quality of life.

The area is rich in environmentally significant areas, including the Bush and Susquehanna rivers, the Chesapeake Bay, Forest Green Lake Preserve, Church Creek, the Swan Creek Watersheds, and the Perryman Water Source Protection Area. The Oakington Peninsula shoreline is the County's only direct access to the Chesapeake Bay. Much of the shoreline is now in County ownership for the benefit of all Harford County citizens.

Various forested plots, creeks, lakes, tidal and non-tidal wetlands, and wildlife habitats abound. Perryman Woods, a large, 100-acre forested wetland complex, can be found in the southern end of the Community Area along the Bush River. The nearby shoreline is home to several rare plant species. Included in the wildlife category are sanctuaries for protected and endangered species such as the Maryland Darter, the Bog Turtle, and the American Bald Eagle. The Bush River Watershed Management Plan, completed in 2003, identifies the Grays Run watershed as a very high quality, sensitive watershed to be conserved, and calls for the preservation of the large wetland tracts around the Bush River. The Management Plan lays out a strategy to improve the overall conditions in the Bush River watershed.

In addition to its environmental features, the area contains a number of museums, sporting venues, a hospital, active farmland, and industrial areas. The Ripken Stadium, a 6,000 seat minor league venue, is located in this community area. Numerous golf courses including Beechtree, Bulle Rock, Ruggles, Swan Creek, and the Wetlands are also located in this community. The Higher Education Applied Technology (HEAT) Center, a research and development park, is located at the MD Route 22/I-95 interchange. Sod Run Wastewater Treatment Plant, Perryman Wellfield, and Baltimore Gas and Electric generation facilities are significant utilities located in this area.

The area is served by six elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools. Based on the October 2003 amendment to the Annual Growth Report, all of these schools are operating below APF standards for capacity. To attract students from throughout the County, a new math and science academy for high school students will be constructed as part of the Aberdeen High School campus. The County operates two libraries in the area, one in Aberdeen and one in Havre de Grace. Both Aberdeen and Havre de Grace have their own police departments, and fire and emergency services are provided by 11 volunteer stations.

The Greater Aberdeen-Havre de Grace area contains a variety of housing types. They range from established communities to new residential developments that include single family, waterfront, and historic homes recognized on the County's inventory of historic sites, as well as modern condominium complexes and older mobile home parks. The U. S. Route 40 corridor and areas adjacent to the MD Route 22 interchange along I-95 serve as commercial centers for nearby communities.

### **Plan for the Area**

Planning for the Greater Aberdeen-Havre de Grace area must address a multitude of issues. These include, but are not limited to, coordination of this Land Use Element Plan with the comprehensive plans for the Cities of Aberdeen and Havre de Grace, creating compatible land use designations adjacent to these municipalities, ensuring that development in the Perryman area is consistent with the community vision, and environmental concerns relating to the Perryman Wellfield and the Chesapeake Bay.

The Cities of Aberdeen and Havre de Grace provide an abundance of retail centers, as well as an industrial and manufacturing base for employment opportunities. The cities also offer an array of housing opportunities including single family, townhouse and apartment/condominium subdivisions, as well as more traditional small town style development. The Federal installation at Aberdeen Proving Ground provides employment opportunities for civilians as well as housing for military personnel. The plan for the City of Havre de Grace is to continue to promote its historical and medical facilities and its emerging technology industry. The City of Aberdeen intends to promote its high technology industry and educational facilities. Continued support and coordination of these directions are important for future land use decisions.

One of the major advantages of the Greater Aberdeen-Greater Havre de Grace Community Area is the multitude of transportation facilities including interstate highways, rail, bus, airport facilities, and marinas that service the area. These facilities make the area attractive to major business and athletic ventures as evidenced by the success of the HEAT center and the Ripken complex. To further enhance the area's accessibility, the City of Aberdeen is working to improve its train station with the goal of making it a regional transportation hub. The County supports this effort.

Major improvements to the interchange of I-95 and MD Route 22 have been completed to provide not only for the existing business, service and tourism uses in the area, but also to accommodate future uses that will be developed as part of the area's Mixed Office (MO) designation. The MO designation applies to an area north of I-95 and is bounded on the west and north by Aldino Stepney Road, and on the east by Carsins Run. The development of properties within the MO area must be carefully planned to ensure compatibility with neighboring land uses, and provide appropriate transition to the rural nature of the MD Route 22 corridor west of the area. Establishment of the MO designation shall not serve as an opening of the Development Envelope in the MD Route 22 corridor.

Development of properties within the designated MO area must be carefully planned to ensure consistency with both County and municipal plans. The County is considering an expansion of the HEAT center to the west taking in the area between the existing campus and Aldino Stepney Road.

The southern portion of this area is characterized by more commercial-type uses with several hotels and motels. There should be a continuation of commercial uses on the southern portion of the interchange along with employment opportunities similar to that of the HEAT site on the north. Expansion of the MO designation or rezoning of lands adjacent to this designation are not supported by this Plan.

The southwestern corner of the I-95 and MD Route 155 interchange has been annexed by the City of Havre de Grace. The City's comprehensive plan calls for the area south of the interchange to be developed as a corporate or technical office park area. Adjoining this is the proposed 1,100 acre Bulle Rock complex. The existing golf facility will be expanded to include a conference and community center complex along with a planned adult community. An integrated transportation network will connect the development, and a new road serving the development will enter MD Route 155 just south of the interchange. Uses in this area need to be evaluated not only for consistency with this Land Use Element Plan but also for their potential impact on the interchange and Sion Hill, a National Historic Landmark.

Beyond the immediate vicinity of the I-95 interchanges with MD Routes 22 and 155, the area north of I-95 from Aberdeen to Havre de Grace will continue to support primarily agricultural land uses with some very rural housing. Susquehanna State Park lies adjacent to the Susquehanna River in the northern part of the planning area. The plan for this portion of the community retains the State Park and large agriculture land holdings as the predominant land uses. The continuation of agricultural preservation efforts is also encouraged.

The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, a Certified Maryland Heritage Area, extends along both sides of the Susquehanna from the Conowingo Dam to the head of the Bay. The development of this "Heritage Corridor" is designed to link the cultural, and historical resources of the area, while providing recreational opportunities. Because of its history and waterfront location, Havre de Grace is a crucial link in the Greenway. Participation in the Greenway program should strengthen the opportunities for additional tourism-related employment. It also supports the efforts of business and property owners to revitalize downtown Havre de Grace and its waterfront.

Included in this Heritage Greenway program is a series of trails. In Harford County, a trail will connect the State Park to Havre de Grace. One of the major links that still needs to be developed is the segment linking the State Park to North Park in Havre de Grace. Another important component of the Greenway is the establishment of a pedestrian river crossing to link the trails in Harford and Cecil counties. Completion of this segment will benefit not only the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, but it will also be consistent with the goals of the East Coast Greenway to develop an urban trail from Maine to Florida. Long-range plans for the East Coast Greenway show the trail coming through Harford County. The County should continue to support these efforts.

The area to the north of the City of Havre de Grace is primarily characterized by rural residential and agricultural-type land uses. A large tract of land in this area is operated as a quarry, which is adjacent to low intensity residential type uses. Several tracts of land have been acquired by the quarry operation to help buffer the operation from surrounding areas.

An added concern for the Community is the abandonment of existing mining operations. Citizens have expressed concern about the appropriateness of siting landfills in these areas because of their potential impact on groundwater. The community will work with Harford County and the State of Maryland to improve screening of the mining operations, and to reclaim and/or stabilize sites for open space, parks, or other compatible uses whenever feasible.

The western and southern portion of this community area will continue to support industrial and business park type development. The area adjacent to the Route 40 corridor has a number of commercial and industrial uses, with strip commercial centers as well as individual businesses fronting this major highway. Of major concern to the community is revitalization of these abandoned or underutilized sites in a manner that supports the specialty retail provided in the cities. Also, development and revitalization in this area should not conflict with uses proposed at the I-95 interchanges.

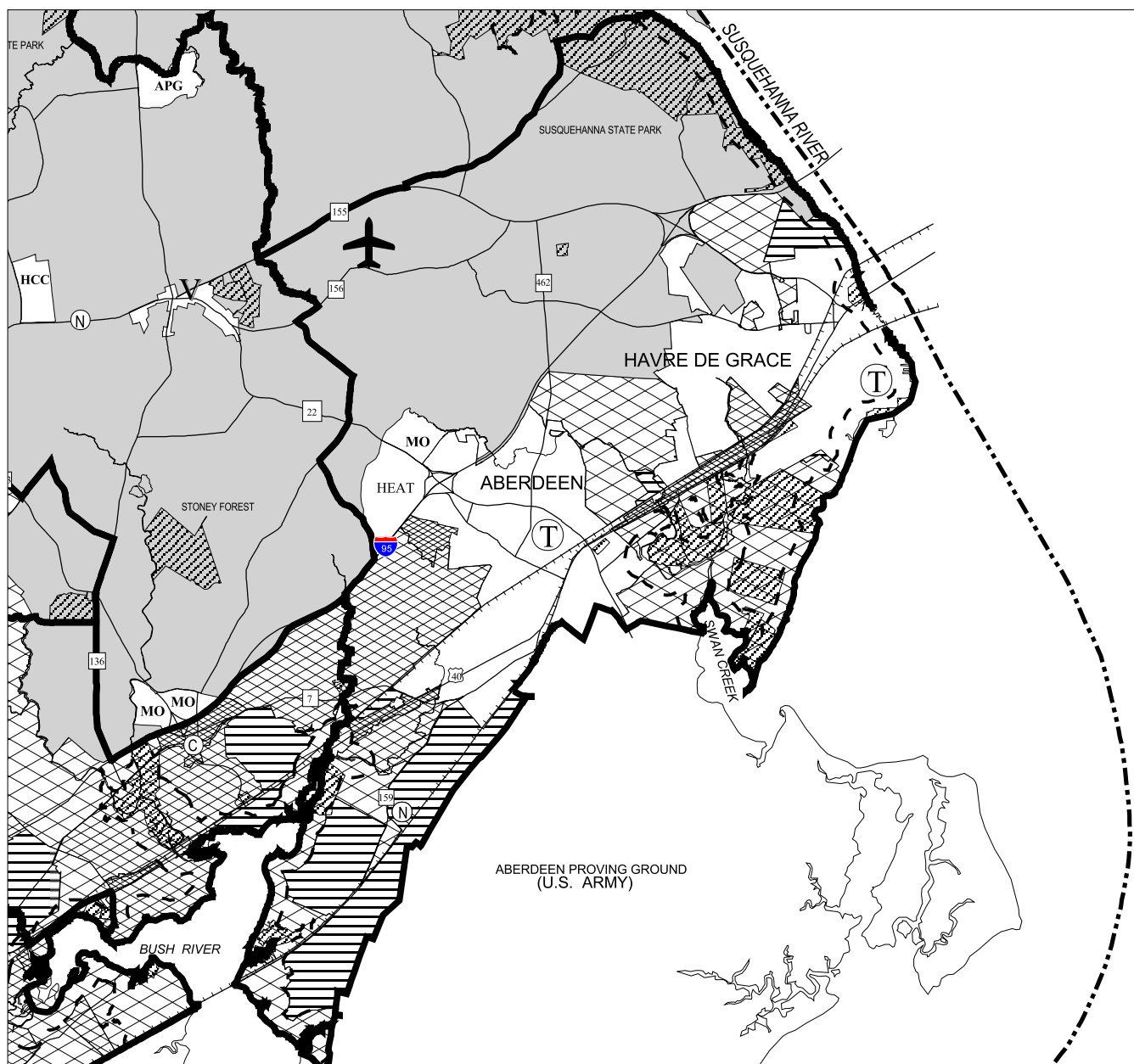
The Perryman and Forest Greens area in the southwestern part of the community area contains predominantly residential uses ranging from single family lots to mobile homes on residential lots. The area also contains several environmentally sensitive areas, including the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area and non-tidal wetlands. The plan for this area is to continue these land uses near the water, while maintaining the environmental integrity of the area.

In the middle portion of the peninsula, mixed commercial and industrial development provide a base for new economic development opportunities. Future development of this area will be guided by the report "Vision Planning for the Perryman Area". Completed in November of 2001, the report is based on a community participation process. The report calls for Perryman to be a diverse, mixed-use community that serves as the economic engine for the County. It proposes unifying the area by creating a focal point and identity for the community, which builds on the designated Neighborhood Center. Light industrial and distribution warehousing uses will be separated from the remainder of the community by a proposed access route for truck traffic located east of the railway. West of the railway, high tech campuses are proposed. These will adjoin residential areas to encourage walking, biking and transit options. A continuous network of public open space and parks would integrate natural features with the developed areas. The report also provides transportation options, and conserves much of the area's unique environmental and cultural features.

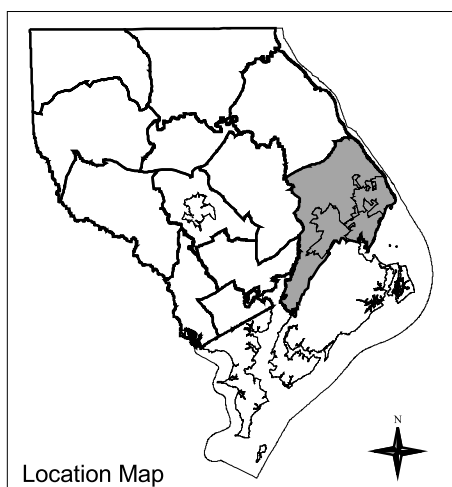
The Perryman Peninsula is important to the County not only for its economic potential, but also for its importance as a water source. The Perryman Wellfield, which supplies 25% of the County's public drinking water supply, is located in this area. Protection of this important drinking water source is of the utmost importance to the County. Therefore, protection strategies presented in the "1997 Perryman Wellhead Protection Plan" are considered part of the plan for this area. These strategies include the designation of recharge zones, the development of regulations to ensure that activities within designated zones do not impact the quality and quantity of the wellfield, signage, groundwater monitoring, emergency response and educational programs. Development and other activities within the recharge area must be completed in a manner consistent with this Plan.

In order to implement the plan for this community area, continued coordination between the County and the municipalities is paramount. This area provides an excellent opportunity to implement Smart Growth policies while still providing the quality of life that has made this region so desirable.

To do this, a long term solution to infrastructure and services needs to be developed prior to further growth in this area. Other measures necessary to implement this community plan will be considered as part of the comprehensive update of the Zoning Code and the Comprehensive Zoning process.



# Greater Aberdeen- Greater Havre de Grace Community Area



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| Agricultural                           | <b>N</b> Neighborhood Center                       |
| Rural Residential                      | <b>C</b> Community Center                          |
| Low Intensity                          | <b>V</b> Rural Village                             |
| Medium Intensity                       | <b>T</b> Town Center                               |
| High Intensity                         | Airport  |
| Industrial/Employment                  | <b>HCC</b> Harford Community College               |
| State and County Parks (over 10 acres) | <b>HEAT</b> Higher Education Applied Technology    |
| <b>MO</b> Mixed Office                 | <b>- - -</b> Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Boundary |
| <b>—</b> Community Area Boundary       |  |

Figure 42□

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